(d) Does not arise.

(e) The litigation was initiated by M/s Zaiwalla & Co. who refused to accept all reasonable offers made for an out-of-Court settlement. As a result, there was no option available to the Government except to proceed with the litigation. As such, the question of negligence does not arise.

Issues discussed by Indian and Thai P.Ms.

1069. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI :
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) what specific bilateral matters were discussed with the Thai Prime Minister during his recent visit to Thailand;

(b) what are the points on which agreement has been reached; and

(c) what steps are being taken to implement the proposals agreed to by both the Governments ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) to (c) During the recent visit to Thailand, the Prime Minister discussed with the Prime Minister of Thailand various issues of common concern to both countries. In particular, discussions were held on bilateral relations in various fields, such as trade, economic, investment, educational, tourism, cultural, technical and scientific cooperation, as well as people-to-people contacts.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that India and Thailand should maintain close contacts and exchanges for continued cooperation. It was decided to draw up a time bound action programme for cooperation in specific projects which would be evaluated and expanded after one year. The private sector is expected to play its role in increasing trade and investment both ways. The PM of Thailand accepted the invitation to visit India.

The two sides also took note of the growing menace of drug-trafficking and crossborder terrorism. Recognising that international terrorism in all its manifestations is of common concern to all nations, the two sides reiterated their resolve to combat terrorism in all its forms. Both sides also agreed to maintain and strengthen their cooperation in combating drug-trafficking and its nexus with terrorism.

Pending Applications for Passports in Chandigarh and Jalandhar

1070. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) how many applications for passports are lying pending in the Passport Office in Chandigarh and Jalandhar and for how long;

(b) whether it is a fact that people have to wait for more than a year to get their passports in the normal course which cause them great hardship and inconvenience.

(c) whether an eight point guidelines has been issued by the Ministry for issuing out of turn passports and if so, what are these guidelines;

(d) whether applicants waiting for more than eight months for their passports have also to approach for out of turn passport, whereas in other countries passports are issued within a week;

(e) what remedial measures are being taken by Government for early issue of passports as in the other countries; and

(f) by when the new system for early issue of the passports is likely to come into force ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) As on 2-4-93, the total pendency of applications for fresh passports at RPO Chandigarh was 86474 while the pendency over one month was 76369. The figures for Jalandhar are 99305 and 84854, respectively.

(b) The time to issue a passport in the normal course varies between Passport offices depending on the work load.

(c) Government have issued instructions giving Passport Officers the discretion to issue passports on out of turn and priority basis based on documentation submitted by the applicants. Specified categories who can be given out of turn passports have been listed which *inter alia* include exporters, people going abroad for employment and medical cases.

(d) Since the time to issue a passport in the normal course varies between Passport Offices depending on the work load it is possible that in some cases applicants who have been waiting approach for out of turn issue. While in some countries it is possible that passports are issued within one week in others the time taken is longer.

(e) and (f) Government have taken a number of steps to expedite issue of passports which *inter alia* include augmentation of the staff strength; increase in the supply of passport booklets and streamlining procedures to increase productivity and reduce delays. The exercise to improve the availability of passport services is an ongoing one.

Camps to train Militants in Pakistan

1071. CHOWDHARY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report in the Statesman dated April 12, 1993, captioned Special ISI camps for militants to the effect that Inter Services Intelligence of Pakistan has set up special camps to train militants at Aliabad, Kalamulla, Nakyal, Gulpur and Khuratta in POK and that camps for training guerillas had been shifted from Chirat to Muzaffarabad and Queta;

(b) if so, that is the Government's information about such training camps; and the number of terrorists including Afghan guerillas under training in these camps; and

(c) what step have been taken by Government to prevent them from sneaking into Indian territory and carry out terrorist activities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA) : (a) Government have seen press reports to this effect.

(b) Training camps exist both in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. In these camps, apart from Kashmiri militants estimated to number over 18000, Afghan nationals have also been trained.

(c) Government have intensified surveillance and patrolling along the Border/LOC to prevent infiltration. Government remain vigilant about activities deterimental to national security and take all measues to safeguard it.